

American

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Statement by Secretary Clinton on World Health Day, April 7*World Health Day to focus on effects of urbanization*

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesman
April 7, 2010

STATEMENT BY SECRETARY CLINTON**World Health Day**

Today the United States joins the World Health Organization and countries around the world in commemorating World Health Day.

This year's theme is "Urbanization and Health: Urban Health Matters." The rapid rise in the number of people living in cities will be among the top global health issues of the 21st century. The World Health Organization estimates that six out of every 10 people will be city dwellers by 2030, rising to seven out of 10 by 2050. In many cases, especially in the developing world, the speed of urbanization has outpaced the ability of governments to build and maintain essential health, water, sanitation, and hygiene infrastructure and provide basic services.

Disease is both a symptom of poverty -- with overcrowding, inadequate infrastructure and lack of health care increasing transmission and susceptibility -- and also a contributor to poverty. Poor health shreds communities, undermines economic opportunity, and holds back progress. And it denies children around the world the opportunity to live up to their full God-given potential. We have also seen that oceans and borders are no defense against the pandemics that threaten us all. These are global challenges that demand a global response.

The United States and our international partners are committed to improving health and strengthening health systems around the world. We understand that addressing global health challenges is not just a humanitarian imperative -- it will also bolster global security, foster political stability and promote economic growth and development.

Through our Global Health Initiative, we are investing \$63 billion, with an emphasis on women and girls whose health has the biggest impact on families and communities. Efforts such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Safe Water Programs and the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) Making Cities Work strategy are focused on public health concerns of urban residents worldwide. Our foreign assistance programs are improving local governance, creating new partnerships with civil society

and the private sector, and targeting the urgent needs of the urban poor. From Afghanistan to Zambia, we are helping cities create a better quality of life for their inhabitants through access to higher paying jobs, improved health care, and quality education.

On this World Health Day, let us renew our resolve to work together to meet the global health challenges of the 21st century.

Analysis: U.S. Nuclear Strategy Redefines Deterrence

By Stephen Kaufman
Staff Writer

Washington — President Obama's new nuclear arms strategy aims to retain nuclear weapons to deter any primary threat of a nuclear strike on the U.S. homeland, while also furthering his ultimate goal of making them obsolete.

The strategy, contained in a 72-page report — the Nuclear Posture Review Report (NPR) — produced jointly by the Defense, State and Energy departments and the National Security Council, addresses what is believed to be the mostly likely threats in the coming decade — terrorists obtaining nuclear materials for "dirty" bombs and an increase in global nuclear proliferation spawned by additional nuclear-armed states. States acquiring nuclear capabilities would provide the more alarming dilemma of an unending proliferation cycle that would destabilize whole regions of the world.

The NPR (PDF, 2.7MB) cites a reduction in the role of nuclear weapons in the overall U.S. national security strategy, and comes as the Obama administration reduces its nuclear stockpiles through the recently concluded new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), maintains the nearly 20-year U.S. moratorium on nuclear testing and says it will not build any additional nuclear weapons.

At the same time, it seeks to dissuade others from seeking their own nuclear arsenals by pledging not to use nuclear weapons on nations that are in compliance with the 1970 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and nuclear nonproliferation obligations. The strategy also reassures U.S. friends and allies that the American nuclear deterrent will remain only "as long as nuclear weapons exist," and will be strong enough that they will have no need to develop their own.

Coming one year after President Obama's April 5, 2009, speech in which he called for concrete steps to eradicate nuclear weapons from the world, the NPR is a clear statement that while the international security environment that existed during the Cold War years has changed, "the risk of nuclear attack has increased."

During the decades-long standoff between the United States and the former Soviet Union, the concept of mutual assured destruction helped to dissuade both countries from using their nuclear arsenal, since the leaders of both countries were well aware that any nuclear strike would invite a full and debilitating retaliation. The NPR recognizes that the adversarial relationship between the United States and the Russian Federation has ended, and both countries, as well as other nuclear armed powers such as China, now face the common 21st-century threats of nuclear terrorism and unsustainable nuclear proliferation.

"Al-Qaida and their extremist allies are seeking nuclear weapons. We must assume they would use such weapons if they managed to obtain them," the report states. Along with the willingness of violent extremists to target civilians, the traditional notion of deterrence loses its effectiveness when faced with adversaries who are willing to sacrifice their own lives to inflict massive casualties, it says.

Therefore, the NPR places high importance on preventing extremists and nonstate entities from obtaining nuclear materials, equipment and technologies. The president's convening of the April 12-13 nuclear security summit in Washington is focused on obtaining wide international agreement on how to secure all of the world's nuclear material within four years to prevent it from being stolen or seized.

The other principal nuclear weapons threat comes from states like North Korea and Iran, which by pursuing their own nuclear weapons programs and missile delivery capabilities in violation of international law, risk not only adding to the existing level of available weapons components and technology, but could provoke their neighbors into developing their own nuclear deterrent, and consequently even greater proliferation of nuclear weapons.

"Continued non-compliance with non-proliferation norms by these and other countries would seriously weaken the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), with adverse security implications for the United States and the international community at large," the NPR states.

While the United States pledges not to use nuclear weapons against NPT-compliant states that are meeting their obligations, the report sees a "narrow range of contingencies" in which the U.S. nuclear arsenal can help deter a conventional, chemical or biological attack from states that are not compliant.

"That does not mean that our willingness to use nuclear weapons against countries not covered by the new assurance has in any way increased. Indeed, the United

States wishes to stress that it would only consider the use of nuclear weapons in extreme circumstances to defend the vital interests of the United States or its allies and partners," the NPR states.

As Vice President Biden said in an April 7 article, this separate approach toward states observing international nonproliferation norms versus those who are not provides additional security incentives for continued compliance, while ensuring that those in defiance "will be more isolated and less secure."

A senior Defense Department official told reporters in an April 6 background briefing that the president considers the NPR "a foundational document of his administration" that reflects both his thinking and his leadership.

The NPR offers "a concrete, pragmatic work plan" for moving forward the president's agenda of a world without nuclear weapons, the official said, and is closely integrated with concurrent U.S. policy and strategy developments, such as START, the nuclear security summit and the upcoming NPT Review Conference at the United Nations in New York in May.

First Afghan Women Diplomats Train in Washington

Program aimed at diversifying, expanding Afghanistan's diplomatic corps

By Jane Morse
Staff Writer

Washington — In a groundbreaking effort by their country, 10 Afghan women diplomats completed a special U.S.-sponsored training program designed to expand and diversify Afghanistan's diplomatic corps and to foster a broader exchange between Afghan and American diplomats.

All of the young women diplomats were from Afghanistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). Although some have considerable travel experience, it was the first visit to the United States for each. They were in the United States March 29-April 6 as part of a capacity-building project for Afghanistan sponsored in part by the State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Additional sponsors were the department's Office of Global Women's Issues, the Bureau for South and Central Asian Affairs and the National Foreign Affairs Training Center (NFATC).

The visit included an intensive four-day training program at the NFATC Foreign Service Institute campus in Arlington, Virginia, as well as a series of meetings, roundtable discussions, presentations and events with counterparts and senior officials at the Department of State, international nongovernmental organizations and representatives of foreign missions.

The program is based on a request made to Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues Melanne Verveer by then-Afghan Foreign Minister Rangin Dadfar Spanta during his visit to Washington in May 2009. Spanta's goal was to see women as 20 percent of the Afghan diplomatic corps. Women diplomats currently comprise about 13 percent of the Afghan diplomatic corps, according to Steve Steiner, the State Department officer who helped arrange the program.

"This is the first time we've brought Afghan diplomats — male or female — to the United States for training," Steiner told America.gov.

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), however, has trained women civil servants from about eight different Afghan ministries — not including the Foreign Ministry and the diplomatic corps — in the United States and helped them form an association for women civil servants in their country, Steiner said.

The brutal repression of Afghan women under the Taliban regime is well known to the world, but the fact that women are now holding responsible positions in the Afghan diplomatic corps and training outside the country is a sign that critical improvements under the fledgling democratic Afghan government are occurring, according to Nazifa Haqpal, one of the Afghan diplomats in the training program who works as a member of the Afghan MFA's Spokesman Office.

"That we are now in the United States is an example that [Afghan] women have the authority to travel, to talk about the country, to raise the views of the country, of the people, of the women, to the international community," Haqpal told America.gov. "There are challenges for women and men," she said, "but much progress."

Munira Faizzad, an Afghan diplomat who works as the human rights desk officer at the Afghan MFA, said she and her female compatriots see themselves as "good leaders of our people" in a society where both men and women have their own crucial roles — roles she poetically described as the two wings of a bird that allow it to fly.

The United States has made a long-term commitment to help Afghanistan rebuild itself after years of war, a commitment for which both diplomats expressed gratitude. Haqpal stressed that more cooperation between the United States and Afghanistan is needed in the political, economic and military spheres to reduce the threat of terrorism. The threats from terrorism create insecurity not just in Afghanistan, but in the region and the world, she said. "And we had the example in 11th of September" to prove that, she said.

Steiner said close contact with the women diplomats will

continue via the U.S. Embassy in Kabul. "We have organized a group that does women's issues in Kabul, including people from the political section, the cultural section, the public affairs section and the USAID mission out there, and they will meet with them again when they go back," he said.

U.S., Nigeria Pledge Greater Cooperation

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.
Staff Writer

Washington — The United States and Nigeria have launched an initiative aimed at fostering greater cooperation between the two nations and assisting in governance, regional cooperation and development, energy, and food security and agricultural development.

"Today, we are taking a concrete step forward that will strengthen and deepen the partnership between our two nations," Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said at joint press conference with Nigerian Secretary to the Government of the Federation Yayale Ahmed in Washington April 6. "And we hope it will support the aspirations of the Nigerian people for a peaceful, prosperous, stable, democratic future."

The U.S.-Nigeria Binational Commission (BNC) initiative was signed by Clinton and Ahmed in Washington April 6. The United States establishes binational commissions with strategic partners as collaborative forums aimed at tangible and measurable progress on issues considered critical to shared goals, the State Department says.

"Nigeria is Africa's most populous nation, its largest contributor of peacekeepers, a significant trading partner of the United States, its largest producer of oil, and the largest recipient of direct investment by the American private sector in sub-Saharan Africa," Clinton said during the briefing.

Clinton outlined four areas where working groups established under the initiative will focus:

- Good governance and transparency — considered essential to Nigeria's democracy and its prosperity.
- Regional cooperation and development — to improve conditions in the oil-rich Niger Delta region with a specific emphasis on broad collaboration on security and counterterrorism.
- Energy reform and investment — while Nigeria has abundant oil, natural gas and other natural resources, it lacks an effective electrical system to support the growing demands of the nation.
- Food security and agricultural development — a program to provide Nigerian farmers with modern tools and methods of farming to feed the nation and to lift rural families out of poverty.

Secretary Ahmed thanked the United States for its support, but also stressed that Nigeria, which has undergone a period of uncertainty due to the extended absence of President Umaru Yar'Adua because of a prolonged illness, is a strong democracy committed to progress for its people.

"It is very important to us at this point of our history, when we are able, to show as a nation that we are capable of survival," Ahmed said at the joint press conference. "You have highlighted some of the challenges that we face, but we believe they are not insurmountable because we are open to criticism."

Clinton said Nigeria soon will celebrate 50 years of independence and will hold an election in 2011.

"Nigeria, like many countries, must look to the future, and how to create conditions that will protect the gains that independence brought [and] guard against ongoing and serious threats to its progress," she said.

BINATIONAL COMMISSION

U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria Robin Renée Sanders told reporters at a Washington Foreign Press Center briefing April 7 that the binational commission serves to strengthen democratic institutions essential to Nigeria's election in 2011, and to addressing energy insufficiencies, as well as food security and development in the Niger Delta.

"We will also support Nigeria's efforts to strengthen its democracy, civil society and fight corruption," Sanders said.

Nigerian Ambassador to the United States Adebawale Ibidapo Adefuye, speaking at the same briefing, said this commission and the four major areas it addresses coincide with Nigeria's Vision 20-2020. The 20-2020 initiative is a drive to become one of the 20 most industrialized and advanced nations in the world by 2020, Adefuye said.

"By signing the BNC agreement, the United States government has demonstrated its genuine concern with aspirations of Nigerians at every level, both in the public and the private sector," Adefuye said. "We are joint partners in the search for global peace and security."

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